

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELIZE 00185 182143Z

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 HEW-06 AGRE-00 AID-05

DODE-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 JUSE-00 NSAE-00

SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01 L-03

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FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5524

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

UNCLAS BELIZE 0185

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON DECRIMINALIZATION OF
MARIJUANA

REF: STATE 057902

1. USE OF, POSSESSION OF AND TRAFFICKING IN MARIJUANA IS
PROHIBITED BY THE BELIZEAN DANGEROUS DRUGS ORDINANCE WHICH
APPLIES TO MARIJUANA (CALLED INDIAN HEMP IN THE LAW) ALONG
WITH HEROIN, COCAINE, AND OTHER DERIVATIVES OF OPIUM AND
THE COCA LEAF.

2. VIOLATIONS OF THIS LAW INVOLVING POSSESSION OR
USE OF SMALL QUANTITIES OF
MARIJUANA ARE TREATED AS SUMMARY OFFENSES (A CATEGORY OF
OFFENCE WHICH IS TRIED IN THE LOWER COURTS AND IS ROUGHLY
SIMILAR TO A MISDEMEANOR IN THE U.S. JUDICIAL
SYSTEM). ALTHOUGH THE LAW PROVIDES THAT VIOLATORS TRIED FOR
DRUG VIOLATIONS IN THE LOWER COURTS CAN BE SENTENCED TO FINES
UP TO THE EQUIVALENT OF U.S.\$500, AND/OR A YEAR IN JAIL,
ACTUAL SENTENCES IN RECENT YEARS HAVE VRIED FROM THE

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EQUIVALENT OF U.S.\$10 TO U.S.\$150.

3. VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW INVOLVING TRAFFICKING IN MARIJUANA
CAN RESULT IN INDICTMENT AND CONVICTION BY THE HIGHER COURTS,
AND IN SUCH CASES PENALTIES COULD AMOUNT TO UP TO U.S.\$2,500
IN FINES AND/OR UP TO TEN YEARS IN JAIL. HOWEVER, ACCORDING
TO OUR SOURCES, THE FEW CASES IN THIS CATEGORY WHICH HAVE

COME BEFORE THE HIGHER COURTS IN THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE
RESULTED IN SENTENCES NOT IN EXCESS OF SIX MONTHS IN JAIL.
GAWF

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